

I whole heartily support President Barack Obama's decision to end barbaric and inhumane torture practices and has taken steps to close the "a black hole" in which even children were detained for extended amounts of time.

It is clear the new White House administration recognizes that continuing to condone torture, would gravely put our men and women in uniform at risk of having the same interrogation tactics inflicted upon them.

Five years ago, I called for the immediate closure of the U.S. military prisons in Guantanamo Bay amid reports of abusive interrogation techniques, charged as human rights abuses and violations of the rule of law. As a free people, it is our belief in human rights and dignity that distinguishes us from our enemies, those who commit acts of terror and torture. My state of Minnesota has a proud tradition of fighting for victims of torture. Former Governor Rudy Perpich helped to found the Center for Victims of Torture, the first of its kind and a world renowned center for the treatment and healing of torture victims.

Former President Bush claimed that the Geneva Convention did not apply to those detained at the U.S. base in Cuba, but our nation has made a commitment live up to our international treaty obligations, which I am glad this administration will honor.

President Obama's executive order to reverse failed Bush administration policies and close the prison facilities in Guantanamo Bay has gone a long way to restoring our nation's standing as a global human rights champion.